

# **INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS**

## **United States Department of Agriculture**

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### **WHEELER LAKE IN ALABAMA BECOMES WATERFOWL REFUGE**

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Forty-one thousand acres of the large water reservoir above the Wheeler dam in northern Alabama form the latest refuge to be added to the Federal system of migratory waterfowl sanctuaries. A recent Executive order establishes the refuge on land acquired by the Tennessee Valley Authority along the Tennessee River in Limestone, Madison, and Morgan Counties in connection with the construction of the dam and reservoir.

The new sanctuary, just east of Decatur, extends along both sides of the main channel of the Tennessee River about 18 miles. Wheeler dam is 27 miles northwest of Decatur.

Investigations by the T.V.A. and the U. S. Biological Survey show that waterfowl have made good use of the area, to be known as the Wheeler Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. The Wheeler dam was completed in 1936, and the following year when water was permanently impounded it was estimated that more than a half million wild ducks found refuge there during their spring migration. By planting waterfowl food and cover plants in the shallow water areas it is hoped to make the area even more attractive to waterfowl.

Officials of the Alabama Department of Game, Fish, and Seafood Conservation assisted members of the two Federal agencies in working out plans that led to the refuge's establishment. It is on the Mississippi flyway, but in a region where a safe resting and feeding place has long been needed.

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